



Fact Sheet Region 9

San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board

Overview

The San Diego Region stretches along 85 miles of scenic coastline from Laguna Beach to the Mexican border and extends 50 miles inland to the crest of the Coastal Mountain Range. It encompasses most of San Diego County and parts of southwestern Riverside County and southwestern Orange County. The San Diego Region's Mediterranean-like coastal climate is generally mild; little precipitation falls within this semi-arid region. Most precipitation falls from November through February and occurs principally as rain, with snow common only in the high mountains. The region's growing population enjoys many water-related recreational activities such as boating, surfing and fishing.



The landscape of the region is diverse and varied, encompassing estuaries, bays, lakes, rivers, canyons, mountains and desert habitats. The region supports diverse wetlands, including seasonal vernal pools, coastal salt marsh, freshwater marsh and riparian woodlands. Flow in many of the region's streams ranges from perennial to non perennial along their lengths, with some segments flowing for a few months each year or only during and immediately after rainfall. Nearly all of the acres of lakes

within the region are municipal drinking water supply reservoirs. The region imports approximately 90 percent of its water supply from Northern California and the Colorado River, and much of this water passes through or is stored in the local reservoirs. These reservoirs are the emergency drinking water supply for the region, and storage is strategically managed for the eventual loss of imported water sources should a major earthquake or other event interrupt the flow through aqueducts.



Water Facts

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- 3,900 square miles of land
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- 910 miles of streams
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- 19,220 acres of lakes
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- 85 miles of coastline
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- Average annual precipitation of 10 to 13 inches
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- Annual average temperature of 63° F



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San Diego Region

Vision and Goals for Monitoring

In the San Diego Region, SWAMP is designed to assess the surface water quality and beneficial uses of our region's lakes, rivers, streams, reservoirs and coastal waters. Assessment is a critical component to:

- Identify and characterize water quality and beneficial use problems and threats.
- Determine whether water quality objectives are met to support the listings or de-listings of water quality limited segments under *Clean Water Act* section 303(d).
- Support and expand the assessment of our region's waters under *Clean Water Act* section 303(d).
- Support development and refinement of the index of biotic integrity (IBI).

Information on the quality of our region's waters provides valuable knowledge necessary to make informed, prioritized management decisions, including the need for enforcement of regulatory measures. A comprehensive monitoring program will produce the data needed to identify long-term trends in water quality, beneficial uses and habitat integrity.

Program Activity

Since the SWAMP program was established in 2000, activities within the San Diego Region include:

- Completing a five-year monitoring rotation of the region's 11 watersheds, totaling 49 stations sampled over 16 events, with each station sampled twice during wet season and twice during dry season base flow conditions.
- Conducting monitoring for conventional water chemistry, water and sediment toxicity, fish tissue contamination and bioassessment.
- Coordinating regulatory monitoring requirements under the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) requirements.

- Procuring assessment of the region's Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program by the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project (SCCWRP).
- Providing public education, outreach and dissemination of information about the quality of our region's waters.

Collaborative Efforts

Under SWAMP, the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board (San Diego Water Board) collaborates with other government agencies, environmental organizations, stakeholders and citizen volunteers to enhance monitoring activities throughout the region and to ensure the collection and comparability of high quality monitoring data. Since the program's inception, the San Diego Water Board coordinated several bioassessment monitoring projects with the California Department of Fish and Game, the California State Parks, the County of San Diego and the San Diego Stream Team to develop the Southern California IBI. The San Diego Water Board also coordinated post-fire sample collections in 2004 with these agencies and with the U.S. Forest Service to evaluate the effects of the Cedar fire on the San Diego River watershed. The San Diego Water Board continues to collaborate with the SCCWRP to develop a periphyton IBI and with researchers at San Diego State University to evaluate the condition of intermittent streams. Future efforts include increased coordination with other sampling programs to ensure the collection and comparability of high quality monitoring data.



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